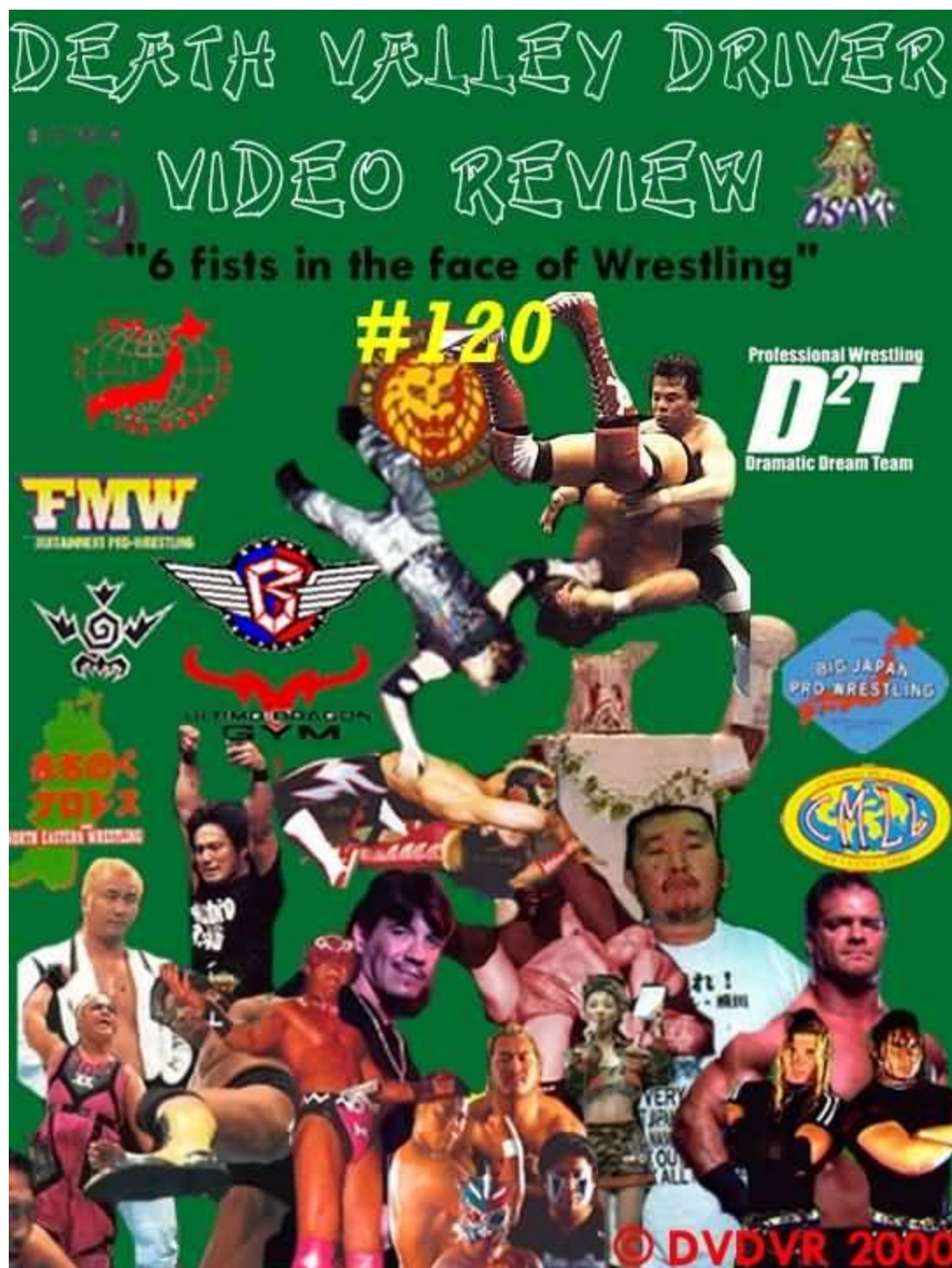




The cover for this beloved DEATH VALLEY DRIVER is a collage by [WES]- a conceptual artist from the great state of Georgia

VILLANO III! ATLANTIS! one of them isn't going to have a mask when this issue is done! RAY! doesn't know who FRANZ SCHUMANN! is! The WWF! puts on a good PPV! No, really. They do! BRODY! vs. LUGER! It's a SHOOT, BROTHA! YUME FACTORY! J CUP! 1990! and more.....
WELCOME TO DEATH VALLEY DRIVER VIDEO REVIEW #120!

Hey! Ray makes with the Gigantor Socha Best of's and also does the MANLY task of watching every second of Athena- FOR YOU- the gentle reader. Phil Schneider takes the 2000 Super J Cup and analyzes the flying CRAP out of it- FOR YOU- the gentle reader. PHIL RIPPA FINDS THE DDT THAT HASN'T BEEN REVIEWED AND REVIEWS IT- FOR YOU- the gentle reader! I supped deep and rambled at length about the SLEAZY AS ALL FUDGE Wrestle YUME FACTORY- FOR YOU- the gentle reader. Fat Tony crawls out of his own Meta-intensive self-inflicted hell to serve up a taut, riveting account of the Lex Luger- Bruiser Brodie Shoot. So fuck the bullshit. Right now, read a wrestling reveiw by a man who also TRULY loves Pro Wrestling - True eloquent Ass-stomper, the adorable Pete motherfucking Stein.....

~!~

!@!@!@!@!@ CMLL PPV 3/17/00

(by PETE STEIN)

CMLL once again delivers the goods with their first-ever PPV, allowing us a brief respite from Televisa's worst habits of clipping EMLL's future stars down to two highspots and the finish while showing every ever-lovin' second of "EMLL 2: The Lost World."

RICKY MARVIN vs. SANGRE AZTECA:

Obviously tapes of Loco Mariachi must have reached the DF because Azteca is sporting the AMAZING new mask with tongue sticking out. It's a great rudo mask because it's like he's giving everyone a raspberry wherever he goes. OTOH Marvin's gone the Big Daddy Roth route for his outfit, right down to the Rat Fink-style "RM" on his pants. Marvin takes the first fall with a Romero Special after hitting his awesome springboard tornillo dive to the floor. Azteca smacks Marvin to the floor in the second fall and does a Silver King dive, but Marvin's out of position and so Azteca essentially gives himself Tiger Driver '91 from 10 feet up. CLASSIC INDY SCUM BUMP! After shifting his neck back into position, he evens the match with the Fuyuki "muscle buster" thingie. Azteca debuts a *sweet* tornado DDT variation I've never seen before, using it to give Marvin a stun-gun onto the top rope while landing safely on the floor himself. Marvin makes a quick comeback, ejects Azteca and tries to do an Arabian *something*, but he wipes out and takes a nasty bump on the apron. Azteca rolls back inside and Marvin ends the match with a tornillo splash for the pin. Both of these guys are off-the-hook at what they do best- Marvin with the crazy flying, Azteca with tripped-out matwork- but with less than 10 minutes to do a 3-fall match, it isn't like they're gonna have a ton of time to show off much else.

They start to pimp the main event with footage of Atlantis hooked up to a CKG machine while running on a treadmill. EL HOMBRE DE SEIS MILLON DOLARES! "We can rebuild him, amigos!"

TORNEO GENERACION XXI SALVADOR LUTTEROTH GONZALEZ:

DR. O'BORMAN JR/ ZUMBIDO/ ARKANGEL DE LA MUERTE/ ULTIMO GUERRERO/
RENCOR LATINO/ MR. MEXICO/ VIOLENCIA/ REY BUCANERO vs. TIGRE BLANCO/
MASCARA MAGICA/ ASTRO REY JR/ STARMAN/ ANTIFAZ/ TONY RIVERA/ SAFARI/
OLIMPICO:

It's baaaaaaaaaaaaaack! Yes, Relevos Ciberneticos makes its long-overdue return to the airwaves! Matwork, matwork, pose, tag. Matwork, matwork, pose, tag. Repeat several times until everyone's had their turn, then let the eliminations and fireworks commence! Sure enough, the second round of pairings start right off with Tigre Blanco using a rolling kneebar into a tricky reverse leglock to eliminate that fine Irish luchador, Dr. O'Borman. Starman and Rencor follow with a clinic on everything they've seen in Japan, capped off with Rencor hitting a Towerhacker Bomb and following with a sort of pendulum full-nelson STF to cashier Starman. Violencia and Magica are next; Vio takes control, drops Magica and heads up top, but Magica evades El Drive-By and hits Vio with a perfect rolling front cradle to eliminate him to a big pop. Blanco comes back in and gets Arkangel in a Delfin Rana position, but Zumbido (with the GREATEST MULLET EVER- he's shaved off the non-Mullet portions ala Tenzan) comes off the top with a bulldog and beats Blanco with a wacky submission. Antifaz comes in and the two hit every spot they know until Ultimo Mullet wraps him up in a pinning hold with the unfortunate result that HIS shoulders are also down and so they both eliminate each other. Rencor comes in and hits Safari with the Angel Wings (that move Chris Daniels stole from Nova); he tries to do it again but Safari stops him, drops him and slaps on an amazingly goofy hanging Sharpshooter for the elimination. Guerrero runs in and makes short work of Safari with a slingshot backdrop followed by an Octagon Special mutation to polish him off. Mr. Mexico and Rivera are next; Mexico isn't... very... good but he can carry a crowd just with his expressions. Think of a crazed Freddie Mercury. Here he ducks a Rivera plancha and beats him with a Sharpshooter variation to get some heat back after dropping his hair to Rivera the previous month. Arkangel comes in and turns Magica inside-out with a clothesline, tosses him out and follows with a *beautiful* old-school tope. Back in-ring Arky tries to hit a lariat but Magica drops him and slaps on a double-Kunzelock to eliminate him. Bucanero comes in and gets rolled up by Magica for his troubles, but he kicks out and proceeds to punch Magica's ticket with a running Excalibur(!). Olimpico comes in only for Bucanero to hit him with a torture rack into a Diamond Cutter. He goes for the Bucky Crusher again but Olimpico slips out and rolls him up for the pin. Astro and Mexico come back in and work the hottest segment of the night so far until Mexico evades Astro's missile dropkick and slaps on a "Look Ma, no hands!" leglock/armlock dealy for the elimination. This leaves Olimpico 1-on-2 against Mexico and Guerrero, which Olimpico quickly remedies by polishing Mexico off with another Octagon Special variation. Guerrero comes in and the two tear down the house for several minutes, teasing a great double-elimination at one point ala Antifaz-Zumbido until they both get their shoulders up. Finally Guerrero takes control with a backdrop, sets Olimpico on top and hits his Guerrero Special (reverse superplex) to pin Olimpico and take the Torneo. Really great stuff, if not on the level of the all-time classico from '97.

APOLLO DANTES/ CIEN CARAS/ UNIVERSO 2000 vs. BRAZO DE PLATA/ MR. NIEBLA/
EMILIO CHARLES JR:

Rudo team does this great bit where they hit the ring with their own handheld pyro, then one by one they toss the empty canisters into the crowd to synchronized explosions. The crowd pops huge for it once they realize the rudos aren't trying to murder them or anything. Match proper... well, Baby Richard is paying homage to Joe Higuchi with an all-red outfit... Porky's still funny... screw it. NEXT!

SHOCKER/ MASCARA ANO 2000/ SCORPIO JR vs. RAYO DE JALISCO JR/ PERRO AGUAYO/ TARZAN BOY:

We debut a new segment on the DVDVR this week, "Good News/Bad News." THE GOOD NEWS: In a recent poll taken to determine the most popular wrestlers in Mexico, Tarzan Boy placed second overall. THE BAD NEWS: Every other wrestler in Mexico tied for first, including the Exoticos. Rudos take the first fall in short order after getting the jump on the tecos- Shocker hits a top-rope elbow to pin Perro while Scorpio hits a Koshinaka-style powerbomb on Tarzan. Tecos come back at the start of the second fall and things slow down, at which point it becomes much easier for the fans to focus their ire on Tarzan and every single thing he does in the ring. It's actually sort of a shame as he's a good worker, but the fact of the matter is that he's in the wrong promotion to be working a "sexy boy" gimmick like this... the traditional EMLL fans will never go for a babyface who does everything but pop out his l'il cheetah for all of THE LADIIIEES to see. Tarzan soon evens the match, getting whipped to the buckles by Shocker only to jump to the top, switch positions and hit a beautiful cross-body on Shocker followed by planting him with a Viagra Driver for the pin. Great little sequence... and the fans boo him unmercifully throughout it, even booing the *replay* of it on the EmpresaTron. Yowza. Final fall has the crowd continue to boo Tarzan out of the joint until he finally gets something of a face pop for eliminating Scorpio with a rana. Shocker heads in only to get ejected by Tarzan who does a great "run up the ropes" plancha only for Shocker to knock him down in mid-air. Shocker re-enters the ring only to get tossed out *again*, this time by Rayo who follows up with the Plancha From Hell. This leaves Perro with Ano, who quickly nuts Perro on the sly and gets the pin to MASSIVE heel heat. Fun little match... Tarzan looked great here despite all of the heat on his person, and the dinos like Perro and Ano do seem to get more jazzed up for the big shows like this one.

MASCARA CONTRA MASCARA, A UNA CAIDA: VILLANO III vs. ATLANTIS:

This is the match the Empresa built to for something like 18 months, and the crowd is about as stoked as you might expect... the heat is at a fever pitch before the festivities even start, as Atlantis wants no part of Babe Richard reffing this match. They go back and forth for several minutes before commissioner Felipe Ham Lee and V-3 himself convince Richard to leave and Rafael El Maya comes out to officiate instead. First few minutes consist of straight matwork... then V-3 says "fuck it," shreds Atlantis' mask, clotheslines him to the floor and hits him with a Tope Suicida '36! Their heads collide on the spot and both guys whip out the blade for full effect, Atlantis to the point where the ring doctor hustles down from the back and teases stopping the match due to Atlantis' hideous bloodloss. Both guys brawl away on the apron until Atlantis tries to suplex V-3 in, but V-3 rolls him up for the first near-fall and the crowd is already screaming since it's a one-fall match. Atlantis' face is already a gruesome mess 5 minutes in as V-3 starts to dominate the affair with various submission holds including a tripped-out abdominal stretch/ hammerlock combo; he then drops down into a pinning move, and you can hear the individual shrieks in the crowd as Maya counts 2 before Atlantis slips out. V-3 follows with a MutaLock before Atlantis slips out and rolls him up for 2, but the crowd reactions are interesting in that there's lots more people booing Atlantis than you might expect. Before long the match is going back and forth with endless near-falls on both sides, and the crowd is at a froth; there's

this great shot of Zumbido, O'Borman and Shocker (w/lady friend) watching things from the back while the two maestros go at it in-ring. Atlantis starts to get the better of things as he ejects V-3, fakes a tope, climbs up top and blasts V-3 with a huge plancha, which can't have been pleasant on those knees of his. In-ring, Atlantis tries for a clothesline but V-3 grabs the arm and slaps on a TEXTBOOK octopus hold. Atlantis slips out and slaps on this weird pinning combo that V-3 is doing the Death Struggle to bridge out of, and instantly a huge "Villano, Villano" chant breaks out. V-3 finally rolls through for a near-fall. He whips Atlantis to the ropes and ducks, but Atlantis slips behind him and slaps on a reverse Gorro Special. It looks like the end for V-3 until he raises himself up, spins around and hits a sunset flip for 2, and the crowd is at an absolute fever pitch that even the gawd-awful Televisa sound mix can't hide. V-3 tries to slap El Christo onto Atlantis, who reverses it into a tricky pin for 2. V-3 breaks away and charges Atlantis... who catches him in the Atlantida, his spinning Torture Rack, to a to a huge pop. V-3 fights and fights then finally slips out to a collective gasp of relief from the crowd. V-3 hits an enzuilariato on Atlantis and celebrates, but Atlantis comes back with a dropkick to V-3's back. V-3 makes the cardinal mistake of charging Atlantis a second time; Atlantis gets him in the Atlantida again, and this time drops to his knees to add pressure to the back of V-3, who finally submits to a H U M O N G O U S pop from the crowd. What follows may be the most emotional unmasking in the history of lucha libre. Surely the rubes on RSPW will have a good laugh reading this (provided the DVDVRs still get posted there), and they can laugh all they want. But as I sat there watching V-3- noble in defeat, his son in his arms, his teary-eyed father Rey Mendoza unlacing the famous mask, his second Scorpio Jr hugging Villanos 4 and 5, then applauding Atlantis' victory- I'm not ashamed to admit that I was starting to cry myself.

Too bad this is all fake, right? Jim Rome can kiss my ass. Vince Russo can blow me, and he's gonna need that gig after burning his bridges everywhere else he's gone. VIVA WRESTLING.

~!~

Socha's Best of Japan '91 Vol II
(by REV RAY DUFFY!)

Misawa/Kawada/Kikuchi vs. Fuchi/Tsuruta/Fuchi:

Super Fonzie hair Taue starts out and gets to be whipping boy early. But all the elbows in the world can't harm that hair helmet. Jumbo tags in and hits Kawada with a stiff running knee that sends Kawada flying over and has Jumbo walking the hit off. Kikuchi comes in later and takes another ride on the "asskicking to get into the comedy matches" expressway. He also gets pressed over the top to the floor by Kawada onto Fuchi. As I mentioned in the earlier review of the '91 stuff. I love the spunky Kikuchi going after Jumbo only to be mauled like a 13-year-old trying to take his picnic basket back from a grizzly bear. The other neat thing is that Jumbo is not afraid to sell as he sells an enzu-lariato by Kawada on the floor for a good 5 minutes. Of course later in the match, while Kawada lays into him, you see the seeds of the comeback as Kawada hits Jumbo. You can see Jumbo's facial reaction change from pained to a sneer of contempt as you know it's only a matter of time before it's clobberin' time. Jumbo just starts

beating the hell out of Jumbo and selling like a champ, including beating so dazed he staggers his way on an Irish whip. This is about 20 minutes of great stiff wrestling.

Tiger Jeet Singh vs. Riki Choshyu :

Ummmm... Tiger Jeet Singh on a best of tape... what the fuck. Fast forward like there is no tomorrow. Life is too short.

Handheld : Jushin Thunder Lyger vs. unknown guy :

I can't figure out whom Lyger's fighting. He's in pink and I think is a gaijin, but I'm not sure. He seems pretty buff and the match is pretty much based on the mat. Again, a solid match, but nothing really spectacular. Lyger drops the guy on his head with a back drop, hits a pescado and wins with a diving headbutt for the win.

(The unknown guy is an 11 year old Franz Shumann, according to secret documents Rippa found- DEAN.)

Misawa/Kobashi vs. Williams/Gordy :

Hey, it's pre death (not sure if it's #1 or #2) Gordy and Pre-KFC Kobashi. They're a jump cut in the match as Gordy drops Kobashi with a drop kick. Kobashi is playing the young, plucky, spunky Ricky Morton in the match. Getting beat up but standing up to the MVC before getting the tag to Misawa. Misawa comes in and Gordy fucking kills him with a rude lariat. Doc does a neat little snap suplex, which he floats over into a cover with. Misawa tags out to Kobashi, who comes in and works on the leg of Williams. Williams makes the tag to Gordy and Kobashi takes him out with a lariat and continues the leg assault on him before tagging to Misawa who works on the leg as well. Williams breaks up Misawa's working on the leg, but when he tries to do the same to Kobashi, Kobashi cuts him off with a lariat. This is really a back and forth match with the momentum changing a lot. Misawa fights out of a Gordy powerbomb attempt to hit a fisherman suplex which William makes the mile away save on. Misawa and Kobashi double team Williams with a double DDT off the second rope, but Gordy saves Williams from that and a Kobashi moonsault before Williams sends Kobashi to the floor and makes the tag. Kobashi gets in his rolling cradle on Gordy for a near fall. He sets up Gordy for the moonsault, but Williams knocks him off the top to the floor. Finish comes as Doc sets up a 3 point stance into Kobashi into the corner, but Misawa runs into him taking him out, Kobashi charges Gordy who takes him out with a lariat for a win. Solid match.

Kikuchi/Kobashi vs. Tsuruta/Fuchi :

And now for something completely different, Kikuchi getting the crap kicked out of him. Joined in progress, Kikuchi fights back with a diving lariat and makes the tag to Kobashi who comes in with the rolling cradle and his impressive moonsault. Fuchi rolls out and tags to Jumbo who begins to beat on Kobashi. Kikuchi tries to save his partner, but Jumbo throws the little annoyance out of the ring to get a near fall with a powerbomb before Kikuchi uses his 3rd grade girl flailing attack. Kikuchi gets in some offence on Fuchi and scores a near fall with fisherman's suplex before running into a hot shot and getting waylaid by Jumbo, who gets a few near falls with Kobashi makes the saves. Jumbo then throws Kikuchi in a corner and just imprints his knee permanently into Kikuchi's face as he's laying against the buckles in the corner. Jumbo

gets a little too confident and misses a corner jumping knee, opening Kikuchi to work on his leg before Fuchi can make the save. Kikuchi tries to go to work on the leg again, but Jumbo drops him with an enzugiri. With Fuchi keeping Kobashi busy on the floor, Jumbo eventually kills Kikuchi with a lariat for the win.

Misawa/Kawada vs. Gordy/Williams :

Gordy and Williams enter swinging one of their tag belts at people in the crowd. Gordy and Williams attack before the bell with their belts on. Kawada uses one of the belts to attack Williams, but is eventually knocked out to the floor. Things get settled down and they try to do the ring intros again only to have another brawl start. This is pretty back and forth. It's odd for me to see Kawada doing a senton. Williams blocks a suplex attempt by Kawada by dropping down and sliding under the bottom rope. Kawada, who doesn't give up the face lock, gets dragged out to the floor, and beat on by Doc and Gordy. This is real back and forth. Gordy gets trapped in the ring and gets his leg worked on by Misawa and Kawada in a number of different ways, each time with Doc coming in hammering them forcing them to break the hold and tag. Williams takes a wild bump for him as he goes flying over the top following an Irish whip into the corner where into a shoulder tackle on Misawa. Kawada gets hit with a running powerslam for a 2, but when Williams goes for the Stampede, Kawada hooks the ropes and Misawa trips him from the floor to get a near fall. Most of the segment near the end is with Kawada in the ring fighting Williams as Gordy fights Misawa on the floor. Misawa gets taken out by Gordy with something as Kawada does his best to fight off both guys. Misawa is pretty much dead on the floor as Kawada is desperate for a tag as the MVC do their best to keep pounding him. The crowd eats it up Kawada constantly kicks out, but he's living on borrowed time, eventually getting taken out with a Williams lariat. This is a good match. The crowd heat is excellent (the crowd yells something each time Kawada throws a kick). Kawada looked very strong in the match before eventually getting overwhelmed. I'm assuming Gordy nailed a piledriver or powerbomb on the floor as Misawa wasn't even moving after the match was over a good 5 minutes later.

Atsushi Onita vs. Tarzan Goto:

Goto and Onita have a Dodge Trucks are RAM TOUGH opening with lots of headbutts and Goto all but goes to all 4 sides of the ring to show "Hey! I've got a blade! And this is me cutting myself!" He does this 4 times, I'm sure to make sure everyone in the arena knows he did a blade job. Hogan must have taken his blade lessons from Scroto. Onita hits a tope! This is a whole lot of kicking and stomping and the chairing and the hurting and the blading and the who ha ho, nice lady. After all this, Goto takes it to the mat, working on Onita's leg, even doing an STF. Onita does a lariat that sends himself out to the floor. Goto follows him out and hits a drop kick. Onita piledrives Goto through a table at ringside. This is probably the most wrestling I've seen Goto do ever, however, this doesn't make this a good match. I can't figure out how some of these matches made a best of tape. Goto hits a bunch of big moves on Onita, but can't put him down. Onita hits a TFPB, but only gets a one count. It takes 4 more TFPBs to put Goto away. There's no shame on leaning on the fast forward during this.

Atsushi Onita vs. Gregory Vertchev:

Hey, Dave Scherer is here to show Onita what hardcore judo is all about. I'm pretty sure I've reviewed Scroto vs. Gregory. In any case, Judo boy v. garbage wrestler usually not equals good.

Masanobu Fuchi vs. Dean Malenko:

Joined in progress, it's "Spritely" Dean Malenko. Dean's all about not being stoic and is all about doing Van Dam like fruity embellishments on moves, including a front handstand flip before doing a tope. He also is all fired up and playing to the crowd. Dean throws in a lot of high flying in this, at least, as high flying as anyone he's seen Dean since '95. Lots of roll ups and flipping out of moves and doing the top rope thing. This is cool to see just because it's the most animated I've seen Malenko ever. Fuchi counters a Dean roll up attempt with a stump puller to get the win. Kind of short, but goofy fun.

Jumbo Tsuruta/Akira Taue vs. Steve Williams/Terry Gordy:

Gordy and Williams continue their swinging the belts entrance. And All Japan is the group that asked Mick Foley to please stop hurting their fans? Jumbo and Taue aren't afraid, because Taue's got the Pompadour of Love. The fans are solidly behind Jumbo in this. It's a stalemate early on with a lot of moves not really haven't an effect early until Jumbo hits the jumping knee on Doc for a big pop. Another interesting about Jumbo is that he wasn't afraid to sell his arm after throwing some of his own moves, like he was hitting Williams so hard with an elbow smash that he was actually hurting himself. Taue gets an abdominal stretch on Gordy at one point, Gordy just picks him up with the hold on and tags out to Williams who drops a double ax handle on Taue. Taue plays the whipping boy for a while as Williams and Gordy both take turns working on his leg and later kneeing and kicking him in the face, eventually busting him open. Taue plays the world's lumpiest Ricky Morton as Gordy and Williams keep cutting him off from making the tag to Jumbo. Gordy and Williams do a masterful job of cutting off the tag, but it's only a matter of time until Jumbo gets the tag as he fights off both guys and deals out some deadly lariats on both men. In the process of this, Joe the ref takes a bump and misses a Jumbo powerbomb on Gordy and a pair of back drops on both guys. Williams saves Gordy from another powerbomb, allowing Gordy to hit his own. Williams hits the Stampede, but Joe won't count because he's not the legal man. Gordy softens up Jumbo with some lariats, but when Jumbo blocks one and goes for the tag, Taue isn't up on the apron yet, still suffering from the earlier damage. Now Jumbo is the face in peril as Gordy and Williams single him out. Williams goes from the Stampede, but Jumbo hooks the ropes and Taue attacks Williams from behind to block it. Jumbo eventually makes the tag and Taue starts hitting the sumo lariat, before he telegraphs one, allowing Williams to hook his leg and Gordy to nail a lariat. Jumbo comes in and hits a back drop and throws Taue on top for a near full. Williams charges in and nails Jumbo off the apron, opening Gordy to hit a powerbomb and get the pin on Taue. Good old fashion tag match.

Overall, the stuff from All Japan generally holds up well today in my opinion. There was a lot of selling, stiffness and psychology that helps this stand the test of time. The early FMW stuff isn't really that good, I mean, it's a lot of not well hidden blade jobs and that's about it.

~!~

Super J Cup 2000- 3rd Stage- MICHINOKU PRO COMMERCIAL TAPE (by PHIL SCHNEIDER)

This was a much less star studded event then the previous two, with the bigger named wrestlers being replaced by Indy scum guys. But- fuck!- no one loves Indy scum guys more then me so I enjoyed the heck out of the show. Nothing really match of the year quality, but this was like the greatest DDT show of all time.

CIMA vs. Ricky Marvin:

Ricky Marvin, stupid name aside, is quite the budding superstar. Highflying as a mofo and all fresh faced and good looking, he could use some polishing but he has the look of someone we will all be enjoying for years. CIMA had that look about a year ago, but he has arrived now and he outshined Hall of Famers like Jushin Liger, Gran Hamada and Great Sasuke. He may have more natural charisma then any wrestler in the world right now, and is a heck of a worker besides. CIMA plays rudo in this match, as he catches all of Marvin's highspots (which included a rock ass Mysterio springboard rana, and a springboard tornado mortal, which was all super crazy looking) and added a pace to the match. CIMA gets the win with the iconoslam and the mad splash.

Ricky Fuji vs. Sasuke the Great:

Along with sending Kaz Hayashi, WCW evidentially loaned out Vince Russo to guest book this match. Both these guys kind of suck (although Orihara is carryable) so you might as well have 6000 crotchshots, valet interference, heel valet smooching by handsome babyface, and a ref violence DQ ending. Sasuke the Great did hit a nice Asai moonsault for what that is worth.

Yuuhi Sano vs. SUWA:

This was a really showcase for SUWA- ass-stomping rudo supreme and utter bastard. He starts the match by spitting gum at the august puroresu legend Sano. And he and his Crazy Max boys go from there. Lots of great shit in this match, Sano continues being the greatest Florida Junior Heavyweight champion ever, by doing lots of victory rolls and big U.S. style bumps (he does the Shawn Micheals fry your back on the ring apron bump) although he does dump SUWA right on his head with released German suplex, which I don't remember Denny Royal ever doing. Our boy SUWA supplies the ass stomping full extension Ciclon Rameriez tope along with various stomps, punches and sliding face smashing dropkicks. Big near fall section ends with Sano hitting the Tiger Suplex for the win. Real good stuff.

Men's Teioh vs. Katsumi Usuda:

Both of these guys advanced to this show, by winning tournaments in Big Japan and BattlARTS respectively. Both tourneys had a ton of wrestlers I would have rather seen in this spot. Usuda kicks really hard, but is sort of unfocused and a little dull, Minoru Tanaka is standing right there, and he is superior to Usuda in every way. Men's Teioh used to be one of the better juniors around, but since leaving the WWF he has been mired in Big Japan, where he has had some of the crappier matches to ever see videotape. He has spent most of his tenure getting stabbed by

Abdullah the Butcher, and getting smoked in actual wrestling matches by nearly everyone he is in with. Before this match I would have rather seen Ted Blackbear or City Monkey or Crazy Sheik in this tournament than Teioh. So I have no idea why this match was so good, I mean this match wasn't just good in the Hey-this-didn't-suck- as-much-as-I- thought-it-might way, it was good in the HOW-THE-FUCK-DID-MEN'S-FUCKING-TEIOH-AND-KATSUMI-MOTHERFUCKING-USUDA-HAVE-A-MATCH-WHICH-SMOKED-KAZ- HAYASHI- VERSUS -GREAT-SASUKE kind of way. This was mat based as a mofo, with both guys taking it right to the mat and staying there. Teioh (who came out to the rock ass blaxploitation anime music) was like Joe Malenko in this, using a whole lot of carnish pro style mat wrestling, which Usuda was countering with shootstyle mat work. It was a real interesting contrast and it was pretty seamless. Teioh mainly worked towards his Miracle Ecstasy chokeslam bomb, while Usuda was trying to knock him out with stiff kicks and arm submissions (they had the super cool cross armbreaker counter of the Miracle Ecstasy which is a spot I mark out for, Usuda also broke a M-E attempt with a Sebastian Janakowski-esque field goal kick to the face. NOT GUILTY!!). Usuda was doing a lot of cool adjustments in the arm submissions to make them hurtier looking, and Teioh was just kingsized in this as he breaks out a thousand zillion awesome roll ups for the hot finish. I am not sure whether he is back for good, but he was quite the surprise of the tourney, and I am actually starting looking forward to his matches again.

Curry Man vs. Onryu:

Mmmmm gimmicklicious. I really hated the Curry Man gimmick the first time I saw it, but Daniels has goofed it up and made it fun. He cut the rockin prematch promo, about how he was going to turn the J Cup into the C Cup. This was right after Daniels signed with WCW so he was getting jobbed out in Japan. Onryu may be my favorite of the Indy sleaze guys, he isn't a bad worker, has the super cool revengeful ghost gimmick, and he has a seemingly unstoppable urge to LIVE HIS GIMMICK and actual die in a wrestling ring. What more could one want. Fun little match, with Onryu doing all of his goofball spots. Curry puts him in a sleeper, and Onryu collapses immediately like he died, confusing Curry and the ref, he uses this confusion to take an advantage, and he hits his shoulder destroying springboard tope-con-hilo to the floor. Onryu also hits a super nasty Tiger Driver '91 which seems like waaay too brutal a move for a first round J- Cup match in front of 1400 people between a guy with a plate of curry on his head and a Zombie. The end is pretty funtastic, as Curry Man hits his Spicy Drop, and to break the count, Onryu grabs the ref's arm. When Curry gets up to complain, Onryu hits his Onryu clutch (freaked out La Magistral) for the big ole upset with the crowd going batshit. Curry had the classic curse filled interview afterwards (FUCK! SHIT! MOTHERFUCKING TANABE ... YOU WIN NOW CIMA... YOU WIN... FUCK).

Gran Hamada vs. Shinya Makabe:

One of the longer first round matches at 10:31, this was a big booking mistake as the length exposed the big holes in Makabe's game. The first bit was pretty good as they did some nice mat wrestling, and the end was pretty swank, but the big long middle section was terrible. Makabe looked pretty lost for big sections, just walking around stomping Hamada or lying in a kneebar. Not a particularly good big stage debut for Makabe as he looked kind of like a greener Manabu Nakanishi or a less dynamic Takiawa. All the matches in this tourney were too short

and it would have been nice if they had cut five minutes from this and added it to Sasuke vs. Hayashi or CIMA vs. Marvin.

Great Sasuke vs. Kaz Hayashi:

Good match, although it wasn't as mindblowingly great as I had hoped. The psychology of the match had Hayashi (who was in full Beniot aping mode, even using the double snot rocket) working for thecrippler crossface, but it is flawed because he slaps on the move in the first minute of the match, and has Sasuke in it for over a minute. Since the move was killed early there is no heat when Kaz goes for it later in the match. The match was also a little short, as it seems they rushed to the finish. Almost all of the matches were too short, but this is the only match were it feels truncated, and the guys are unable to pull off a complete match in the time allotted. There was some good stuff though, both guys were working really stiff, and they had some hot moves, the coolest being Hayashi reversing a top rope powerbomb into a rana while they were both on the way down. Hayashi also hits his flip dive, although we had a rare diveless Sasuke match. Sasuke gets the win with a thunderfire powerbomb without much build. Not as much of a disappointment as Black Tiger v. Sasuke from the Skydiving J was, but still disappointing.

Tiger Mask IV vs. Jushin Liger:

This match was real good and was the best of the tourney. It didn't really have a Juniors feel to it, as it was based around stiffness and selling rather than workrate. The crowd was rabidly behind TMIV and they built the match so that his near falls were very believable. They started with TM laying in the kicks to Liger and hitting a nice plancha, then they did some nicely built mat work, which was reminiscent of the Ultimo Dragon vs. Jushin Liger matwork from their Tokyo Dome match, including the real boss Romero special into a dragon sleeper by Liger, and each man putting on a deep camel clutch. They moved from the mat work to a stiff striking section, with Tiger throwing big kicks, and Liger laying in the shotays. The first big nearfall came when TM blocked a Liger Shotay hit a left hook, and then a Tiger Suplex, with Liger kicking out at 2 and 2/3rds. Tiger also hits a top rope double underhook suplex into a cross arm breaker, before Liger takes over with a shotay. Liger then starts busting out big moves, hitting a shotay, a Liger Bomb and a Brainbuster, with Tiger immediately kicking out of the shotay and brainbuster. It was a kind of no-selling, but it was the Kawada kind, where Tiger was showing his fighting spirit but really conveying the punishment and exhaustion. Liger tries a final shotay which TM blocks, but before Tiger Mask can hit the left hook, Liger wastes him with a left handed shotay for the win. This match actually reminded me a lot of the Jumbo Tsuruta v. Misawa series- With Liger playing the nasty, stiff veteran, while Tiger Mask plays the flashy up and coming superstar. The match was a little short to live up to those standards, but the context was there and it was a heck of a match.

CIMA vs. Onryu:

This was the best match on Nitro all year. Only four minutes long, but they packed a whole heck of a lot of wrestling goodness in those four. CIMA comes down carrying the Curry Man mask and places it on the ringpost as a memorial to his defeated colleague. Crazy Max starts the jerk off bell ringing ceremony, but Onryu hits a springboard dropkick to break up the fun. Onryu then

busts off his springboard tope-con-hilo of shoulder separation. They repeat a lot of the spots from the Onryu v. Curry Man match, including the dead man sleeper, and CIMA doing the Spicy Drop and Onryu grabbing the ref's hand. Onryu also breaks out an even nastier Tiger Driver '91. After the TD'91 Onryu slaps on a sleeper and CIMA does the Onryu death sell. When Onryu goes to the top CIMA hits his shotay-iconoslam-mad splash finishing sequence for the win. I really would have liked to see more Onryu in this tourney, he had two matches but less than 10 minutes to work. He can go longer, and I want to see it.

Ricky Fuji vs. Gran Hamada:

These two were in the stinkiest first round matches, Fuji has never been worth a crap, and Hamada is finally acting his age, so of course this match is going to suck right? Nope this kind of rocked and was shockingly good for a Ricky Fuji match. Fuji came out singing one of our glam rock faves, and Hamada came out with his daughter Ayako (who came equipped with her Keith Watanabe restraining order*.) Fuji worked over the knee and dominated the match (he got the advantage with a sweet dropkick to the knee, which Hamada did a flip bump on.) The match moved at a nice pace, with Fuji hitting all of his big moves (Kamikaze, spinning piledriver.) The ending was freaking off the hook, as Fuji is sitting on the top rope, and Hamada goes up like he is giving him a superplex, but instead he spikes him with a spinning DDT for the win. Not spectacular or anything, but this was best Ricky Fuji match I can remember.

(*HE'S KIDDING of course!- DEAN)

Great Sasuke vs. Yuuhi Sano:

I was all ready to call Sasuke the disappointment of the tourney- as his match with Kaz wasn't that great and neither was the first couple of shootstyle minutes of this match. Luckily, his propensity for self-mutilation wins out and this match ended up being damn good. Despite his UWFI years Sano doesn't really work shootstyle anymore and the first couple of minutes were kind of unfocused. They move from shootstyle to lucha though, and then the match gets rocking. Sano gets whipped into the corner and does a backflip out, and then hits his rad tope. Sasuke chimes in with his space flying tiger drop variation and gets suplexed to the floor taking a rude bump on his back. Sano tries a bunch of Tim Horner rollups before deciding to abandon that crap and just kill Sasuke dead. Smashing his already melted skull with a top rope German and a brutal released Dragon before getting a KO with a kick to the face.

Men's Teioh vs. Jushin Liger:

Men's continues his return to the wrestling promised land by rocking another banger. The match started with a neat series of shoulder blocks. Liger worked super stiff including hitting the nastiest kappo kick I've seen in a while. Teioh took the blocks shotay and hits a rocking Oklahoma roll pin for two. Teioh works over Liger's knee with the Bret Hart figure four around the post, and gets a bunch of near falls with his roll up variations. The end came rather abrupt with Liger hitting a nasty shotay and brainbuster for the win. Teioh looked great, but I thought the end kind of made Teioh look like a jobber, by dispensing him so easily. Teioh appears to be back, and I want to see him keep this roll up in Big Japan.

SUWA/Kendo Ka Shin/El Samurai /Superboy/Chapinger vs. Ricky Marvin/Shinya Makabe/Tiger Mask IV/Maasaki Mochinzuki/Minoru Tanaka:

Report Card

Technicos

Ricky Marvin: B : Spots looked good, especially when he worked with SUWA, springboard corkscrew plancha is damn insane, didn't do much mat work and slipped slightly on a couple of his springboards, definitely the flashiest of the workers.

Tiger Mask IV: A-: Both started and finished the match, had very nice sequences with Ka Shin and Superboy, hit a swank twisting asai moonsault. Did disappear slightly in the middle section of the match, left hook didn't look as good as it had in the past.

Shinya Makabe: C+: Looked better here then in his singles match, as he could come in and hit spots and avoid long dead spots. Nice series of rolling German suplexes. Did have a horribly mistimed spot with Chapinger.

Maasaki Mochizuki: D+: Very disappointing outing from a good worker, his kicks looked off not hitting nearly as crisp or as stiff as they usually do. Didn't do much but kick, so the poor kicks were very glaring. Didn't actively fuck up the match or anything, but didn't help it at all.

Minoru Tanaka: A : Just looked great, worked fun shootstyle sequences with Ka Shin, and had a big brawl with SUWA. Hit some really great rollups into submissions, and also broke out the swank tope con hilo. Looked like a star, this was TMIV's match so he did fade into the periphery a bit.

Rudos

El Samurai: C-: Basically mails this one in, and he is just sort of there not trying anything new or too difficult. Didn't seemed too excited to be there.

Chapinger: F: Motegi is just so awful now, he looked like dogshit in this match, half blowing everything he tried including appearing not to be able to run the ropes correctly. He also brought his stupid little table in the ring, adding a touch of unnecessary garbage. Just a blight on wrestling at this point.

Superboy: B+: Was a fatboy flyer supreme here, hitting an Asai Moonsault along with several other moonsault variations. Had a very nice finishing sequence with TMIV and 45 seconds or so of Lucha Libre goodness with Marvin. A little personalityless in this match which brings the grade down slightly.

Kendo Ka Shin: B+: Basically the opposite of Superboy, wrestling wasn't anything special, but was just such a bastard in this, slapping his partners, breaking up a Chapinger pin by smacking him with his board. A lot of fun.

SUWA: A+: The total package, just rocks the house in the wrestling sequences, guiding young Ricky Marvin to an asskicking Lucha set, and getting all shootstylish and brawly with Minoru Tanaka. Plus SUWA displays that psychotic intensity we all love about him, SUWA is the guy in the prison yard no one tries to ass rape, he does a better job of conveying real danger than anyone else in wrestling. At one point he covers Tanaka and after getting a two count, just slaps the shit out of the ref Ted Tanabe, he also rips Tanabe's shirt and stomps him after the bell. SUWA is quickly turning into my favorite wrestler, and was the hidden king of this tourney.

Match: B: A lot of good stuff overall, but not much pace or flow, and it had a couple of dead spots, still really fun and worth checking out.

Chaparita Asari vs. Hiromi Yagi:

Decent little joshi workrate match with some fun shootstyle takedowns by Yagi, and some good highflying by Asari (including a really nice, top rope quebrada) They didn't seem to meld too good though, and Asari sold the arm intermittently. Asari hit her skytwister press for the win and appeared to smack head to head on Yagi (which I assumed gave someone a concussion). Asari isn't a rookie anymore, if she can't hit her finisher without killing herself or her opponent, get a new finisher.

CIMA vs. Yuuhi Sano:

Pretty good match with some of fun spots, but they both seemed a little off on their moves. It was mostly little timing things, like CIMA being slow on a roll up, or not hitting the face with his corner dropkick, but they hurt the match quality. I think CIMA's inexperience showed here, as he hasn't worked with Sano before, and Sano doesn't work a lucha libre style. Nice near fall section at the end, ends with CIMA hitting his arm-cross iconoslam and a mad splash for the win, basically the same combo that won the first two matches, but he did the more dangerous arm cross to take out the bigger name worker which was a nice bit of psychology.

Jushin Liger vs. Gran Hamada:

These two had a really great match in the 1999 Best of the Super J, but this was really disappointing, and was probably the worst match of the whole tourney, especially when you consider the length and card placement. For some reason they decided to have Hamada, who is a great lucha style worker but doesn't wrestle stiff at all, beat the shit out of Liger for the beginning of the match. So you have Liger, who had this whole badass gimmick, selling his ass off for the super weak strikes of a 50 year old man, including one of the worst clotheslines I have seen. This takes up a big portion of the early part of the match, then do a section where they exchange big moves which was nice, Liger hit a Superplex, Hamada hit a super Ace Crusher. The ending was preposterous, with Liger hitting his big avalanche brainbuster, and Hamada leaping up and no-selling it, not Kawada no-selling like Tiger Mask IV was doing, but a complete Road Warrior Hawk no-sell. Just shitty, Liger then hits his shotay for the win. Just a terribly thought out match with the ancient 4'10 Hamada playing Goldbergcito and Liger selling for Hamada like Hansen sold for Baba. It amazes me that Hamada had a better match with Ricky Fuji than with Jushin Liger. What is the world coming to?

Jushin Liger vs. CIMA:

The opening of this match had a real big match feel, with CIMA coming out with CRAZY MAX and Liger coming up with a big bodysuit. Good match although it wasn't as good as Tiger Mask v. Liger. They started with a long mat section, which was highlighted by Liger's supernasty camel clutch, and sitting abdominal stretch. The match picks up with CIMA going on offense hitting his spin kick and flip dive. CIMA does the first no-selling of the match, when he pretty egregiously no-sells a shotay (for all the complaints about Liger's gimmick, his opponents did the lion share of the no-selling in this tourney), before hitting some jumping shotays of his own and hits both the Iconoslam, and the cross armed Iconoslam (which shows he knows it will take more to beat Liger, then the rest of his opponents, really nice multi-match psychology from CIMA in this tourney) before catching Liger's knees with the Mad Splash. Liger hits his brainbuster and Liger Bomb for two, then he attempts a running shotay, which CIMA catches and turns into a cool Dragon Sleeper Russian LegswEEP. CIMA then hits his Mad Splash for a big two count (since he had won all of his matches with that move, the crowd really got into the two count.) CIMA then runs into a shotay, and Liger hits two brainbusters for the win. Good match with great crowd heat, but seemed to end a bit abruptly, also the offensive transitions seemed rushed, still a good final.

Post Mortem

I enjoyed the heck out of this show for the most part. I think the early rounds, really lived up to the J-Cup tradition, with some sleeper matches (Sano vs. SUWA and Marvin vs. CIMA) a couple of real great matches (Sano vs. Sasuke, Liger vs. Tiger Mask IV) and some real pleasant surprises (Teioh vs. Usuda , Hamda vs. Fuji.) I think the Semi-finals and the Finals really fell short though, with Liger vs. Hamada being awful and CIMA v. Sano being disappointing, the final was good but much closer to Liger vs. Gedo then Sasuke vs. Beniot. Still a show you should all try to see, much more good then bad.

~!~

%^%^%^%^%^ Dramatic Dream Team - 10/27/99 Handheld
(by PHIL RIPPA)

Some how this show had slipped through the cracks of the DVDVR reviewing machine. Since this week Dean is all about doing that Southwest stuff while Schneider jumped feet first into every single match from the J Crown. And Ray got a week off thanks to Dean's e-mail chewing up and spitting out every thing that wasn't carrying a soothing, loving message from my IP address. That means the DVDVR G team gets to tackle this. No pressure or anything. Let's see what Takagi and the boys have for us today.

Tsunehito Naito vs. Yuki Nishino:

Naito is the Japanese Dan Severn as his no-selling and comical armbars pass as actual wrestling. Plus he has the Dan Severn man boobs. Yikes! Bro, Manzier, whatever, get this boy one STAT! The mullet sporting Nishino is the spunky lumpy heavyweight with a moderate amount of talent. The match is on the south side of good but if you fast forward Naito's jiggling

becomes quite hypnotic. "You will watch my matches. You will bring me sandwich. You will suck at my teat."

"Hands of Stone" Phantom Funakoshi vs. Teneichi Kacho:

Setting: Somewhere in Japan.

Scene: Phantom Funakoshi, desperate for financial relief has enlisted the services of Teneichi Kacho, DDT's resident businessman.

Phantom: "Teneichi, you have to help me. I really need to get some sort of refund this year. My stupid no good half-brother hasn't sent me a check, which by the way, don't get me started on the fact that he didn't manage to beat Takaiwa- Subject us to his quote, unquote athletic ability. I am so frustrated and Takagi is too busy placing phone calls to McMahon to actually pay us."

Kacho: "Well, you have come to the right place. My reputation is starting to expand and my little side business is taking off. You know that I now have clients in America?"

Phantom: "America?"

Kacho: "Yeah, some, buffoon, in Richmond, Virginia has hired my services. I always knew that taking my services to the ring would pay off."

Phantom: "What gave you the idea?"

Kacho: "A colleague of mine - Irwin R. Schyster - did something similar and was successful with it."

Phantom: "That's great but will you be able to help me?"

Kacho: "I'll see what I can do. Do you have any other sources of income?"

Phantom: "No. I thought about possibly stripping but that idea was taken already. Can you believe that Super Boy rakes in the ladies more than me?"

Kacho: "Well you kinda give it away for free already with those tiny pants."

Phantom: "Are you going to help me or not?"

Kacho: "There isn't much I can do for you this year. I can write off the towel as a business expense but that is about it. I suggest that for next year, you get Takagi to pay you in something other than Coors Lights. When you get some actual capital, squirrel it away so you can actually have a savings account. That looks good on your credit report. Also, try to get married. That marriage tax break is helpful."

Phantom: "Really?!?!? Do you think Grace would go out with me?"

Kacho: "No, but I know that Giant Diana will go down on you in a heartbeat."

Phantom: "Alright, That's it...."

Phantom smacks around our little suit wearing friend. Crowd laughs. Fade to black.

Couple of Sports Entertainment side notes. Those vignettes on the DDTtron are really elaborate and straight out of the US Indy scene. I watch them and await to see Jim Ketner pop up talking about paying off Boogie Woogie Brown to take out Exciting Yoshida. Also, the Debbie Allen choreographed, Savion Glover led dance troop returns and continues its amazingly sleazy dance number. I beg and plead, but alas my better half forbids me from allowing this number to see the light of day at our wedding.

Mitsunobu Kikuzawa/ Shigeo Kato vs. Poison Sawada/ Yasaku:

Poison has that denim jacket that says "Professional Wrestling" and the tights that say "I shouldn't be allowed to dress myself". Kikuzawa is the guy that Dean referred to as the Best Johnny Grunge. He actually looks like Wally Yamaguchi was able to pawn some items from the failed "WWF Kaientai Seattle Garage Band Days" off onto the impressionable Kikuzawa. Yasaku looks like a conglomeration of all the FMW heavyweights though he doesn't have nearly the talent that a Kanemura- Gannesuke-Tanaka mutation would bring. This match was watchable as there are some neat double teams and Kato will land on his neck all wrong when necessary. Of course, since Kato and Kikuzawa are involved in some elaborate clan/mob/cliue/outsider/posse/faction/stable thingy, the sports entertainment can't be far behind. Of course, the ending gets ruined as the best of Russo and Heyman comes out as Genki Misae does the stroll-in - complete with entrance music and pyro which is one of two Russo Specials: run-ins that everyone BUT the participants know are going to happen. (That sound guy must be psychic.) The other Russo special is the men vs. women nonsense. The Heyman special is the long extended interference that doesn't actually cause a DQ and the Grace just lets everything go. Blah. The ending really killed this.

Super Rider vs. Daisaku:

The best worst match you will ever see. These two beat the Holy Fudge out of each other but the wrestling was as if I climbed in the ring with Dean and we just tried to do some stuff. Most of the problems lie with Super Rider who spent too much time bragging about stealing his mask off the set of the Fly 2 then in the dojo. Often, lack of wrestling skill is covered by working really stiff which is what Super Rider tries to accomplish. Daisaku is the blue pants kicker boy who is a competent little worker but his attempts to do any chain wrestling are foiled as Rider just has that quizzical look on his face; almost as if to say "Collar and Elbow?" So they just beat the hell out of each other. Rib cracking, jaw shattering fun.

Asian Cougar/ Takeshi Sasaki vs. Ni Hao/ Tanomusaku Toba:

Asian Cougar is my favorite of the DDT guys. He isn't the best wrestler in the federation but he certainly tops the most fun list. Cougar is quite the 18-year-old kid who is depressed about his life and his one release is professional wrestling. He throws himself into it with reckless abandon, doing insane stuff because he freely accepts death as an escape from this world that has horribly beaten and broken him. This match is motherfucking great. Be bedazzled as Sasaki and Ni Hao fearlessly take it to the match and you will love every second of it. They do this eye-popping sequence where they mimic each other's moves including the dueling Dragon Screws. Toba didn't have one of his better days. He loses credibility as Ni Hao and Sasaki absolutely rifle each other with stiff punches and we are supposed to believe that Toba's gloved strikes are more deadly than the ones we just saw. Plus, Toba blows two separate moves where he slips on the ropes ruining whatever slingshot move he was going for. He is also on the receiving end of every last bizarre Asian Cougar leg drop - each one with a higher degree of neckbreaking capabilities. (My fave is the ring-to-floor one because not only is the force greater but Toba also conks his head on the cement.) Cougar also busts out the over the corner tope con hilo which I was marking out for. Ni Hao nails a bunch of different suplexes including two Exploders. I also freaked on the "I can crush your head just as well as you can crush mine with

a Death Valley Bomb” part of the match. There were about a million other cool things in the match. This is why we get all these DDT tapes.

Sanshiro Takagi/ Exciting Yoshida vs. Koichiro Kimura/ Masahiko Orihara:

This is why we don't get all these DDT tapes. Exciting Yoshida isn't very good and boy Takagi sure likes them WWF stars. Maybe, if he spent less time flipping the crowd off and actually wrestling this would have been better. Yoshida has that Lawler singlet and gut look that says “Please help an old man look good and don't hurt me too bad.” Kimura continues to kick hard and no sell a bunch. This needed to have about 10 minutes sliced off. This was freakin long, which it seems that no one was ready for. This Orihara is nowhere as good as the other Orihara and that should tell you a lot. Surprise, surprise, Takagi goes over with the stunner.

Another fun DDT show with one really, really good match, some other respectable moments and some really bizarre stuff too.

~!~

!@!@!@!@ WRESTLE YUME FACTORY 11/30/99
(by DEAN RASMUSSEN)

L'enfant terrible of the burgeoning world of AMAZINGLY Obscure Indie sleaze tapetrading - Scott Mailman - sent me this mojank and my shudder of amazing anticipation is INCONCEALABLE! Scott actually TRIED to send me a tapelist on this but my hilariously inept e-mail server at Mediaone keeps no-selling it. I usually go over to Victor Szany's stupendously helpful JAPAN INDIE WORLD site to steal information, but this is too obscure even for THAT. Luckily, Picksi has the roster up on his wandering website, so that's where I pieced the matchlist together. Either way, Indie highflying death is assured as ONRYO is staring down the business end of my tv screen. Or so you would think.

Azteca vs FM-TARO:

FM-Taro is bedecked in white and wears a coiffe of natty dreads- thus, FM-Taro is sort of like Lizmark Jr if you bleached all of his clothes and mask, and then bleached out all of his talent and experience. Azteca is the most mediocre wrestler in ALLLLLLLLL of Japan- but he owns Kageki Pro, so he has THAT upping his coolness quotient. Here, he has a very rudimentary match with lots of listless matwork and half-assed submissions, astoundingly sloppy lucha rope-running sections and fabulously indie-level rib-crushingly sloppy sentons by FM-TARO to match the only really nice thing in the match- a decent piscada by Azteca. FM-TARO does hit the shoulder-mangling indie Asai moonsault, the worst toprope dropkick you've ever seen and thoroughly has Azteca coughing up blood for three days with aforementioned sentons. FM misses a moonsault and then is the first wrestler to submit to a la Tapitia since 1976. This was certainly the first match on a Wrestle Yume Factory card. Yes sir ree. then FM-TARO unmaskes for whatever reason. I pitch headfirst to the floor in an Azteca-induced coma.

Shigeo Kato vs Arakure Umibozu:

HEY! Shigeo is all over the DDT handhelds that all TRUE Indie fans adore! HEY! This motherfucking match never ends EVER. Umibozu should automatically win just for having the

name Arakure Umibozu, and I'm assuming that I mispronounce the HELL out of it in my mind. This wasn't very good. No no no no no no no no no no no no no no no no . Not at all. The match goes a good 78 hours in the clock in my mind or 25 minutes by greenwich Standard time and there isn't the heat, the moveset or the selling ability to pull off going that long. What happens is that they go into a cycle of some SO very not BattlARTS level stiff kicks to set up some perfunctory matwork (and neither of these two are gonna make you forget Joe Malenko or anything). From this point is where it falls to completely to pieces: the reason that Flair/Steamboat and Hase/Muta can do REALLY long match based on a very simple structure of working on a single body part is because all four are MASTERFUL sellers when the psychology of the match calls for it. There is levels of logical selling as there becomes different layers of punishment recieved; there is a logical correlation to the the selling of the leg being beaten down and the intensified selling of the finishing submission hold. The reason I adore BattlARTS so much is that this is one of their basic tenets- Old School logic and selling to build up to a pay off. Here, you get two wrestlers stretching submission spots without any depth of selling so they just look like they are counting the seconds to start the cycle all over again. If they were in an armoury in King Of Prussia, Pennsylvania and you replaced each submission attempt with a hurricanrana, you would have a the same crappy indie spotfest. The reasons that kill an indie spotfest is the same reason that kills this match- no hierarchy of selling, no structure to the moves being performed, no underlying story- just fitful batches of wrestling moves strung together, signifying nothing. Then there is this screwjob as Kato's stablemates TOBA, Shinnigammi and ONRYO make the run in. Which is kinda like forcing someone to listen to a Glass Tiger cd to lead up to forcing someone listen to a Bullet Boys cd. It's just very unkind. Grody ending to an already stinky match.

Masked Angel Rosetta / Cosmic (Cosmo/Kismet/carshmoe) Soldier vs MAKOTO/ Masked Angel Freia:

MASKED ANGEL ROSETTA is the masked version of pants-punishing ULTRAVIXEN Hiromi Yagi and MASKED ANGEL FRIEDA is- according to Picksi's roster page- Reiko Amano. their masks are super fantastic and make Reiko all sexy for once in her career. God knows I love MAKOTO and Schneider keeps trying to sell me on Cosmic Soldier so my mind is an open book going in. Yagi fucking RULES in this match- as she and MAKOTO go all interGender lucha to great success. FREIA- with the faux blond ponytail under her mask as she mixes in more Lucha than she's ever used in with her shoot-styly mainstay- is free under the mask to be the lucha-fried sex kitten that her JWP gimmick would never allow. Could that steamy Dynamite Kansai Nastasia-Kinski-esque Boa Constrictor Poster be far behind? One can only assume.... Yagi says FUCK THE PO-LICE and hits the nastiest Released German Suplex ever executed in an Osaka Community Center Multi-Purpose Room. Cosmic Soldier- Midnight Blue bedecked and tiny pants adorned- is quite impressive in this outing, doing some pretty sharp Lucharesu Head Scissors and what have you. MAKOTO tries to stretch Rosetta but doesn't get 1/3 of the bend that Lionness or Aja or Hotta would achieve- so FRIEA comes in and does the womanly shredding of Yagi's hip ligaments. The cool thing is that this is wrestled like a straight tag team with MAKOTO selling wads for Yagi- as opposed to the usual mixed tag comedy jokes and assorted horniness. this is more like the Scarlet Witch and Iron Man vs Red Sonja and Conan...er something... The highspot train has Cosmo Soldier getting total non-clearance of the

ropes as he still eats HOT DEATH very sweetly while attempting a Shiryu Tope. They get it paired off with Yagi and Amano doing a myriad of cool roll-ups that take them out to the floor to set up MAKOTO killing the fudge out of Cosmo with toprope Ankle Scissors and the Reverse Ace Crusher thingy for the finish. Fine fine quality wrestling. MAKOTO controls his boner while being covered by Hiromi Yagi and that is some Meng-styled no-selling that I would not be able to pull off. THANK YOU! I'm HERE ALL WEEK!

ONRYO/ Shinnigammi vs Tadahiro Fuyisaki/ Masked God Faraon:

FARAON is nine feet tall and WHOOOOOOO! MAN! he sucks. Great mask though. He and Sghinnigammi (who... what do ya know!... still stinkz!) do a bunch of armdrags early and it's fun. ONRYO spends the first half of the match trying to find some kind of spike to plunge into his eye- though eventually he must face his hideous FATE and he must suffer the shittiness that is Faraon and Fuyisaki. Shinnigami is a slower, crappier version of... hell... John Nord, Kenji Takano, Fred Ottman, Goro Tsurumi, El Gigante, whaddyawant- you name it. He's better than Faraon though. Shinnigammi hits the happy-go-lucky Iron Claw as he procures it with a Dom Deloise smile on his face and then fends off a Faraon save to hit the oddly BEAUTIFUL Iron Claw Capture Suplex. Ah fuck it. I love Shinnigammi. Fukisaki is a nonfactor until he whips out the Dangerous Backdrop that ONRYO takes like ONRYO would usually take a Tope Con Hilo through a flaming barbed-wire pirahna tank. Fukisaki then blends back in to the scenery. Masked God Faraon- who is 100% percent the masked Occidental Scott Putski- gets the pin after a crappy Airplane Spin variation. CONTEMPLATE THIS! Faraon stinks, ONRYO didn't die and Shinnigammi did the coolest things in the match. WOW! I'll let you, the gentle reader, figure it out.

The Yagi/ MAKOTO/ Amano/ Cosmic Soldier match was a keeper. I loved the masks and it was nice seeing DDT periphery guys though it was just stinking it up in the ring when not in with DDT regulars. If ONRYO had wrestled MAKOTO, I think this would have been a big old thumbs way up. As it is- I dunno. I wouldn't recommend it.

GANCARSKI - THE MAN WHO WOULD SPEAK OF U.S. OLD SCHOOL WRESTLING

(by PHAT TONY GANCARSKI)

Brusier Brody vs. Lex Luger

Finally... the GANC has come back to the DVDVR.

In this world of worked shoots and shot workers, I thought it might be interesting and instructive to take a look back at one of the most high-profile "controversial" matches of the 1980s: a Florida steel-cage contest between a very surly Bruiser Brody and a very, very verdant Lex Luger. Most of us know the story of the Luger push. After being in the promotion for three weeks, Lex Luger was pushed to the moon as the only drawing-card in the struggling CWF promotion. One might be able to imagine this being a recipe for eventual conflict with someone, somewhere.

Collar and elbow to start with, with the workers pushing off from each other, to circle the ring. Brody claws at the cage, as if testing its stability. C & E again. Brody on the advantage with an arm twist and a very focused kick to the rookie's ribs. Luger pushes Brody into the chain-link, and lets loose with some tepid punches. Brody's return punches are not so tepid. Luger with an armbar, and Brody is selling here, at least as much as Bruiser sells. Luger with a couple of shots, and Brody pushes Luger into the corner. Brody's hands are around the kid's throat, and even though this is a handheld, you know some serious shit is being said. Eventually the referee (Bill Alfonzo) steps between them, and Luger retreats to the opposite corner, looking down at his feet in confusion. The men circle each other again. Brody with a couple of boots to the gut, and then a forearm to the back of the doubled-over Luger. Bodyslam by Brody, then some kicks to the head. Stiff chops from Brody, then an Irish whip and a telegraphed backdrop, and Luger gets some licks in to a babyface pop. Standard week-looking punches from Luger; nothing has changed in 15 years. Brody is selling for Luger, here, lolling against the chainlink in a daze. More punches, then Luger whips Brody into the corner. Luger charges, and is met by a Brody foot. Kick, punch. Then Luger gets on offense and it's more of what's described above. Brody comes back with a couple of low kicks to the knee of a standing Luger, and then rams the rookie into the fence. No blood as of yet. Brody stomps a prone Luger, again and again, pausing only to hitch his trunks. Luger with the Rock sell, coming back with offense like he just stepped out of a salon. Again and again, those weakass Luger forearms delivered even more tentatively when he sees that Brody is standing upright, not bothering to sell. Luger pushes Brody into the turnbuckle, and rams his shoulder into the abdomen of a visibly unaffected veteran. Bruiser Brody, a man with a short fuse at the best of times, a ring legend who could wrestle pretty well for a big man and who could brawl with anyone, was flat-out refusing to put over this kid's offense. Luger comes back with some half-hearted rights, but Brody just looks at him as if to say, "Fuck you, New Blood. Fuck this desperate promotion. Fuck Lakeland or wherever the hell we are." We've all seen the Hogan no-sell, but there was never any menace in a puffed-up Hulkster shaking his finger like Aunt Jemima incarnate and PMSing. No, Brody was legit, and Luger wasn't, and even on this grainy video the fear in Luger's eyes is palpable. The crowd is starting to detonate with jeers, as their babyface is exposed for the chump he is. The man working the camcorder says something that I can't make out, but one would think he knew the score as well. Luger with a punt to Brody's stomach that Bruiser doesn't even bother to shake off; "Lex Express Ico Pro my ass", he seems to say in advance. More kicks, punches from Luger, and then he steps back. What the fuck are you pulling, Brody? The referee jumps around the corner tableau like a amped-up Chihuahua. Are you all right, Brody? Luger scoops, attempts a slam, but Brody's having none of it, and comes back with an axehandle. Brody tries to muscle Luger into a vertical suplex position, but Luger is pissed. Puts his hand on Brody's throat, but then thinks better of it. Finally, after thirty seconds of non-cooperation from Brody, we have a wrestling move. Brody with a vertical suplex. Luger is prone. Brody with an authoritative stomp as Luger thinks about getting on all fours. Some more stomps, wilder and more focused at once, short-distance dedications to Luger's temples. Brody pulls Luger up, guns him into the ropes, then boots Luger just as he comes off. Brody with a forearm, then Luger comes firing back. We're back within the realm of cooperation here. Well, for a second. Luger fires some shots, which are no-sold, then Brody back with a kick. Chop, kick, sledgehammer, then Brody positions Luger for the piledriver. Luger is less than obliging, walking forward as if realizing how easily the

move could go awry when performed by this loose cannon who has a hard-on to fuck Lex's shit up. Luger maneuvers Brody into the corner, and manages to break free. Collar and elbow. Luger backs Brody into the corner, and starts firing away again. Is no sold, again, with Brody actively leaning forward. A few blows and Luger stops punching completely, and even the camera guy figures out how to focus on the faces of the workers who've decided not to work anymore. Brody nods. Luger punches. Brody doesn't flinch, and Luger looks genuinely aggrieved. The official steps to Luger's side, and Luger says something to him. Luger steps to the center of the ring as the ref waves his hands, in a manner akin to the signalling of a field goal miss. The ref addresses Brody, then turns to Luger as if to say 'get to work'. But Luger had seen this movie before. The men circle each other. Brody with a single-leg takedown, and Luger looked just clumsy enough to have been taken aback genuinely by it. Brody maintains a halfassed leglock on Luger, who is scuttling to the ropes and clearly working a passive resistance gambit. The referee leans in, seeing that Brody has the meal ticket pinned up against metal, and that Brody could disable CWF's last hope in seconds rather than minutes; Luger is obviously no shooter. Luger breaks the hold after the ref gets almost to five. You wouldn't want to be DQed here, not during this house show classic that could be a main-event anywhere. Marks in the crowd start yelling Boring. Imagine, being at a nothing-happening show in fucking Lakeland, seeing wrestling history, and being too stupid to recognize it for what it is. The workers square off, and Brody hooks in a front facelock. Boring, hey you, you fucking suck, says the peanut vendor. Brody pushes Luger out of the hold, and the two men circle yet again. Brody feints another single-leg, but Luger backs away. Tie-up, then Brody goes back to the facelock. Luger backs Brody into the corner, then pushes the ref down, jogs across the ring, and climbs the cage with an alacrity rarely seen in the apathetic Luger. As Luger scrambles to the back, Brody and the ref talk smack to each other, and Bruiser takes a certain pride in his DQ win. Before things can get any uglier, Oliver Humperdink comes to the cage door to get Bruiser, finally, to go home.

@#@@#@#@#@#@# ALL JAPAN WOMEN : ATHENA : Spirit of Ladies sports
(by REV RAY DUFFY!)

Opening is clips of all the historic cage matches in AJW history, setting up the Maekawa/Watanabe v. LCO cage match.

This is in Yokohama Arena. Of course, since this is ATHENA, there is a panel of THOUSANDS.

Acute Sai/Carlos Amano/Ran Yu Yu vs. Azumi Hyuga/Kayo Noumi/Miho Wakizawa :
For some weird reason, Yu Yu appears to have a Swastika on her outfit. JWP girls attack early and try to set up the pose that Miho and Kayo are known for. This turns into clipovision, as ATHENA is not afraid to really not deliver the wrestling content. This really clipped to all hell, but they do show Amano doing a wakigatame counter to an Azumi top rope dive. Miho and Kayo hit an assisted top rope somersault senton move for a near fall when the JWP team makes the save, setting up Kayo to do the double wrist armsault for the win. The match was 15 minutes long, maybe 4 minutes was shown.

ATHENA 2000 Project : We're treated to large segment of Miho, Kayo, Momoe, Nanae preparing to record their CD song. I'm not an expert on Japanese Pop music but I'm going to

say that... this was not... very... good. It is amusing though if you watch it and sing 3 Count's "I can't get you out of my heart". On the plus side, this only goes about 3 hours and includes them going through speech lessons (including a segment of the girls trying to tape the word "Ah!" which I'm sure some Midnight Chokers will dub onto a loop for their own special brand of use.) We then go to the live performance. I watched this with Pete at my house before the US Soccer Cup. He insisted that one of the 4 girls was not like the other. My impression was that Nanae was quite the Carney Wilson of the group. For what it's worth, Momoe appears to be the best of the group. I guess when we look back at this in 10 years, we'll laugh at this like we laughed at that tape of Akira Hokuto in a sailor suit singing songs in the late 80's. The crowd pan of the reaction was slightly better than the reaction the Freebirds got when they came out singing the song "I'm a Freebird and what was your Excuse." Of course, this was followed up by having what I'm guessing was a real pop group show up and perform a song in the ring. I was rather hoping they'd turn the AJW youngsters evil by having them beat up the girl band for upstaging them, but they do not deliver.

A recap of the events building up to the cage tag match. There's the press conference where the LCO dress up in street clothes, their ability to show off their true evil spirit. Pink jeans for Mita, denim skirt for Shimoda, who looks like she's getting ready to go to a craft fair after the meeting is over.

Estuko Mita/Mima Shimoda vs. Kumiko Maekawa/Tomoko Watanabe : Escape Cage Match : The LCO come in carrying, chains and color coordinated chairs and kendo sticks. I think I figured out why I fell off the LCO bandwagon. Mima Shimoda is a pretty shitty garbage wrestler. This becomes a big problem if that's your gimmick. I'm a big proponent of the "If you can't do something well, don't do it at all" school of thought. Mima has some real shitty chairshots. I'm not saying you should cave in people's heads everytime, but Mima's semi toss of a chair always looks bad, especially if someone has to sell it like it was a real chairshot. LCO control early with Mita bloodying Tomoko first. Mita escapes the cage first leaving Mima in a 2 on 1 fight. Mima tries to fight off both girls with her Ax Kick. Considering the master of that move is in the ring... they pale in comparison. Tomoko and Kumiko both try to make a run for it, but Mita does the fire extinguisher spray on them to stop their escape, then climbs back into the cage. Watanabe and Maekawa make a double break for it at one point, but they are hit with the Death Lake Driver and the Death Valley Bomb as they are on the ropes. The LCO work over Tomoko's bad knee. Maekawa and Mima fight over mounted punches, with Mima delivering some Bart Gunn in the mount sissified slaps. There's a real goofy spot where Maekawa is up against the ropes and the LCO try to double lariat her and run face first into the cage. Maekawa then hits them both with ax kicks, then takes off her boots so she can hit them with her bare foot rather than the padding of the boot. Maekawa climbs out (barefoot mind you). The LCO continue to work on Tomoko's leg. Maekawa hits Shimoda from the outside to stop her from escaping. Tomoko fights off both girls and tries an escape, but Mita catches her and gives her an electric chair suplex off the top. Mita and Shimoda hit their Death Valley Bomb/Top Rope Somersault Ax kick move, but Shimoda goes up to the top of the cage and does a real horrible looking "I accidentally hit my own partner even though my opponent saw me on top of the cage for a good 30 seconds before I jumped so they could easily get out of the way" spot. Tomoko hits one

moonsault on Mita, then attempts to do one off the cage, that finds nothing. Both the LCO use this as a chance to climb out, but Maekawa climbs back in and stops Mita's escape. Mita hits the Death Valley Bomb on both girls and spits mist in Maekawa's face to set up the escape. This really didn't stack up the first LCO cage match. It was good in spots, but there's a lot of things about Mima's work that have been bothering me the more I see of her. There was some good psychology in the cage escapes, but the finish just seemed to have come out of no where and was a bit of a let down.

Clips set up the Lioness/Nanae rematch.

Lioness Aska/Morimatsu vs. Nanae Takahashi/Miyuji Fujii :

Hey, Fujii tries to be all spunky with the drop kicks at the start, but then Lioness throws her around with a giant swing. Lioness works over Nanae a bit, probably for not giving Lioness' Crush Gals single props at the start of the show. This goes into clipafy mode. A Nanae plancha misses Lioness and Morimatsu and takes out Fujii and Noumi. Aska sets up and delivers the double stomp through a table off one of the lighting towers. Fujii takes the top rope double stomp through a table. She kicks out of the screwbomb, but Lioness hits her LSD II (sort of a fisherman buster into a falcon arrow) for the win.

Hilights play about the whole angle with Hotta and the JWP girls, including Hotta getting into a fight with the JWP president.

Yumiko Hotta/Commando Bolshoi/Takako Inoue vs. Manami Toyoto/Kaoru Itoh/Dynamite Kansai :

They tease something with Hotta shaking only Itoh's hand at the start. Hotta and Kansai play "elbow each other right in the face" a bit. Itoh is looking quite doughy. I guess the ZAP outfit was really slimming. At one point, Bolshoi slaps an Octopus Hold on Toyota, who stands up and tries to walk to the corner to make a tag before Bolshoi turns it into a sunset flip for two. There's a big segment in the middle where Hotta and Toyota tease hitting finishers, but there being blocks and partners making saves before Hotta hits the pyramid driver. Hotta tries for a belly to back superplex, Toyota gets out and sets up the JOC suplex, as Hotta fights it, Kansai comes over and kicks Hotta in the face allowing Manami to hit it. She gets a two when Itoh jumps off the top rope and double stomps a bridging Toyota to break up her own partner's pin. Well, that had to fucking suck to take. Hotta hits the pyramid driver. Hotta gets the mic and talks some smack at the JWP girls and slaps Toyota so we get a pull apart.

The show didn't suck, but as is usually the case, ATHENA has a lot of non-wrestling. If I wanted to see non-wrestling, I'd watch WCW.

~!~

&*~&*~&*~&* WWF In Your House - Canadian Stampede (7/6/97)
(by PHIL RIPPA)

I was originally just going to watch the ten man as part of my reviewing all the greatest matches but I forgot that this show had the TAKA vs. Sasuke match, and there was that Triple H/Mankind match sitting right there and this suddenly turned into the WWF's Great Hidden PPV of the 90s. The down side is that I have to sit through two hours of Vince McMahon commentary.

I refuse to review the Blackjacks/Goodwins Free For All match - you are on your own for that.

Hunter Hearst Helmsley vs. Mankind:

Rematch from King of the Ring where Helmsley took the crown by going over Mankind. This is their forgotten match as this was the setup for the Summerslam Cage Match which was in turn a set up for Dude Love which was eventually a set up for the return of Cactus Jack in Madison Square Garden. You can see how much people change over three years. Hunter hadn't discovered the joy of HGH, Chyna looked more man than woman and Foley didn't have an ass the size of a city block. By the beginning of this year, these two were having classics and part of the reason behind that was familiarity. You can see the chemistry they had as this was only their second meeting and they were clicking. I really am starting to think that I was always too harsh on Hunter. He bumps like an absolute freak in this match. He takes a pseudo Jerry bump and then does a homage to his buddy Shawn Michaels by doing the over the corner post bump to the floor. Mankind hits a nasty hip buster and also pasted Triple H with a suplex on the steel entrance way. The psychological focal point of the match becomes Mankind's knee when Chyna gives Mick a hip toss into the stairs. Helmsley plays Ric Flair by using the figure four and pulling on the ropes for leverage. Foley sells the leg for the entire match, even remembering to use his good knee on the running knee smash. The match is fairly back and forth for the 12 plus minutes it goes. Chyna involves herself in the match and everything breaks loose. Both men get counted out. The continue to brawl for a few more segments on the PPV including Helmsley blading. Good opening match.

TAKA Michinoku vs. Great Sasuke:

Gee, you think these two have wrestled each other before? Aaah, the great ironies of the wrestling world. Sasuke was originally going to be the corner stone of the WWF's Light Heavyweight Division. For his debut matches, Sasuke brought along TAKA to work with him. After this match and their match the next night on RAW, Vince and the WWF told Sasuke thanks but no thanks, here's some cab fare and a cloth to dust your nifty statue while TAKA got to show Sunny his mounting face. Well, you would think Sasuke would be angry but I figure he isn't complaining about not being one of the WSEF's comedy job boys. It was a definite wise move to debut these two in Calgary as the good Canadian folks were used to good wrestling from the Stampede days. The WWF's Must Work Loose Policy must not translate clearly in Japanese because Sasuke wasn't afraid to smack TAKA right in the face. There is a vicious spin kick that was well deserving of the double feature it got. Each man gets off his trademark moves with TAKA hitting the springboard plancha and the Michnioku Driver. Sasuke hits the Ryder Kick and the Aasi Moonsault. He then uses the Thunder Fire Powerbomb/Tiger Suplex combo for the win. Good match though the ending seemed to come out of nowhere. I have not seen it but I have heard rumblings that their match on Raw the next night was just as good if not better.

Vader vs. The Undertaker

God really likes those Canadians as this was originally supposed to be Ahmed Johnson challenging for Taker's title. (The mind aches at the horribleness of that). Ahmed crippled himself and his WWF career by blowing out his knee so Vader was subbed in. This isn't terrible but not spectacular. It is a solid US Heavyweight match and just what you would expect from these two when neither of them is mailing it in. The pace is.... well.... methodical. Lots of "high impact" offense (punch, kick, clothesline, chin lock). They do blow a couple of things like a reversal of a tombstone but they usually covered it nicely. There is a good looking chokeslam off the top rope by the Undertaker and tombstoning Vader is a deed that made the Undertaker look really good. Match would have been much better if they had taken the gloves off and laid into each other. That was the problem with Vader's WWF run. They built him up as this hard hitting monster but with their kid glove way of treating their stars, Vader couldn't do what he did best - potato the fuck out of someone. And Vader is not free from blame in this equation. His problem is it is either all or nothing. He is either busting open Cactus Jack's face or laughably trading punches with Sid. Oh well.

Legion of Doom/Goldust/Ken Shamrock/Steve Austin vs. Brian Pillman/Jim Neidhart/Davey Boy Smith/Owen and Bret Hart:

(Fun note - Jim Ross makes mention of a camera crew shooting a documentary on Bret's life. No that won't come back to bite you in the ass.) Thankfully, the WWF realized the situation it was getting into by having the PPV in the Hart's backyard and instead of pretending the faces were faces and the heels were heels, they used the crowd to their advantage. Talk about getting a crowd psyched. First, they have Canada's own Farmers Daughters sing the Canadian National Anthem. Then they introduce Stu and Helen and then they introduce the hometown heroes with Diane Smith coming out in her Ms. Calgary Alberta outfit. (They also smartly gloss over the fact that Neidhart is from South of the Canadian border.) By the time the match actually starts, the place is rocking and they decide to ignite the crowd even more by having Bret and Austin start the match off. The crowd remains rabid for the rest of the evening. As for the actual match, well it isn't all that great. I wouldn't have voted for it if I had seen the match in time for the WWF Ballot. There is no real flow to the match as they basically stick to the formula of Wrestler A and Wrestler B fight for a bit. Someone hits a finisher, Wrestler C makes the save while Announcer JR screams about Wrestler D's football background. Take 30 second break, repeat. Plus, the greatness of Bret and Owen can't overcome the fact that Hawk, Animal and Goldust are on the other side of the ring (and that they are teaming with the worst person in the match, Neidhart.) Austin is well suited for his role in this match as he flips off the crowd and brawls with a drunken Bruce Hart. They do a segment where both Owen and Austin go to the back with knee injuries which kills the point of the match - Harts hate Steve Austin. The one upside is that Owen looks the best and gets the rub of being the returning hero as he hits the ring to make a dramatic save. He also gets the pin on Austin after Austin gets into another scuffle with all the Harts sitting at ringside. (Did someone forget to smarten Bruce to the angle or is he really three sheets to the wind?) The teams brawl after the bell and then there is a Hart family reunion in the ring. Something which Austin breaks up by attacking Bret all by himself. This leads to another beatdown and Austin getting arrested. More Hart family rejoicing and the PPV ends. I was expecting more because of hearing people pimp this match but instead it was exactly what I

expected - a hot crowd for a match with some good parts but too many bad workers to make it really outstanding.

Still the entire show is a strong PPV from the WWF who was not afraid of putting on some stinkers back in the day.

!!

NEXT WEEK: GAEA! GAEA! GAEA! SOUTHWEST REGION 1983! JUMBO TSURUTA
SPOTLIGHT! OSAMU~! TACHIHIKARI AND frickin WADS OF WAR!

THE DEATH VALLEY PLAYBOYS.

six fists in the face of wrestling

^^*^*^*^*^*^*

The beginning was the end

Of everything now

The ape regards his tail

He's stuck on it

Repeats until he fails

Half a goon and half a god

A man's not made of steel

Twist away, now twist and shout!

-DeVO